

# Servants of the people

## Meet the officials of the World Community of Islam in the West

By Ghayth Nur Kashif

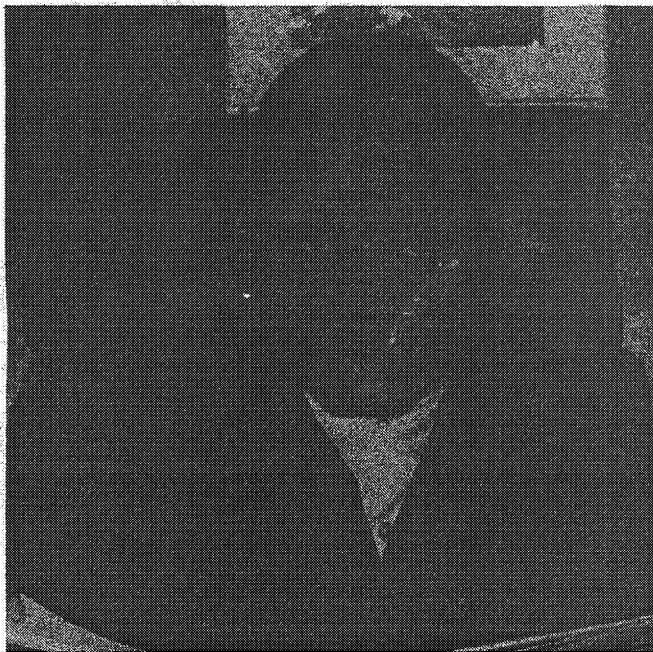
Among the first major reassignments and appointments made by Imam Wallace D. Muhammad shortly after assuming leadership of the World Community of Islam in the West was the selection of Imam Khalil Abdel Alim, former minister of Muhammad Mosque No. 46 in New Orleans, La. to represent him in Washington, D.C. as Southeast Regional spokesman, and Imam of Muhammad Mosque No. 4.

Washington, D.C. is the nation's Capital, and from the political perspective of the Western world, it reigns as the eco-political capital of the globe. From the "East" and "Third-World" lands it is viewed as the imperialistic center of a dying world order. From the scriptural perspective, it has been equated with such ancient kingdoms as Egypt, Babylon, and Sodom and Gomorrah, and Ninevah.

Conversely it is viewed as the futuristic capital of "Zion" and "New Jerusalem."

Mosque No. 4 sits squarely in the midst of this capital city. And like the lighthouse beacon offering light and guidance to ships amid the fog, has held up the light of Islam since it was founded more than 30 years ago by the Honorable Master Elijah Muhammad (may Allah be pleased with him).

Imam Alim reflected upon the nature of his assignment and the significance it holds for him, and others.



### Imam Khalil Abdel Alim

#### HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

"The biggest impression I had when I was first assigned by the Chief Imam, was the challenge of working in the nation's capital, and all that it means, but also because of the large concentration of our people here — also because of the historical significance of Mosque No. 4, being a Mosque started and built by the Honorable Elijah Muhammad himself."

Given this, Alim noted that "probably, any personal feelings I had for Washington as a city, as a mosque, or as a people, was somewhat put in the background considering the very exciting challenge I saw with the new direction and leadership of the Chief Imam, so that perhaps any place we would be able to function in being involved in helping him, would still bring the same excitement."

"The greatest impression I have had in the last two years is the change and

growth of the World Community of Islam...but of course it is a challenge to work in a Mosque in such a large city, such an important city where there is a well developed Bilalian community, and in a mosque with so much tradition, and growth and roots, and of course the history of the Honorable Master Elijah Muhammad."

#### SELECTIVE REWARD

Certainly it is rewarding to be selected to work in a city where there is such high education and among believers who have great depth in Islam. Even to "stay in the running," so to speak, in a mosque like this is an accomplishment, and to be in a position of leadership and responsibility is a challenge and quite rewarding."

Imam Alim will have served in Washington for two years in April of next year. He views past growth and

accomplishments this way:

"The Mosque has grown, the believers have grown, and in all the change and evolution the Mosque has maintained stability, and I would say that that has been a major accomplishment. I might add that the only way such has been accomplished here — and the only way it can be accomplished anywhere — is in faith and adherence to what the Chief Imam is saying. The closer we come to following what he is saying, the more stability will exist in this mosque or any other."

#### BROADENS ACCEPTANCE

"Another accomplishment has been the development of the recognition and acceptance (of the WCIW) by other Muslim communities in this area where many such communities exist. Except for a few, this acceptance has been tremendous."

This has been reflected, he said, "in the attendance of Muslims from other communities at our Jummah Prayer services, joining us at the Eid Prayers, and requesting our presence as guests and spokesmen at other Islamic affairs, and acceptance of representatives of the World Community of Islam, on occasions as spokesmen for the general Muslim community—and just the general spirit of cooperation and exchange between the Muslim communities."

Imam Alim looks forward to the tasks ahead with extreme confidence. Speaking of these prospects, he said, "One of the major things we have tried to accomplish, along with our own personal growth and development with the teachings of the Honorable Wallace D. Muhammad, is to have that teaching and that development reflected in the mosque and the community. That is our general objective."

"Some specifics with that is to improve the physical plant of the mosque, to enlarge it, and to re-establish a school, which requires material development as well as development and organization of human resources."

Continuing, Imam Alim said, "So we want to reflect the general development of the community growth from the teaching of the Chief Imam, and specifically to improve the standard of living and level of understanding of the believers practicing Islam in this area."

#### CASUAL EXPOSURE

Asked to reflect upon his early experience with Islam, Imam Alim recalled: "I first became acquainted with the Nation of Islam about 1960 in Los Angeles, and came in contact with Muslims in a casual manner. Later, while attending a junior college, I came in contact with Muslim students, and I began to read Muhammad Speaks."

"Consequently, having read a couple of copies, I acquired a great deal of information on Marcus Garvey, and I concluded a class paper on black history by saying that there had been only two people — Garvey and the Honorable Elijah Muhammad — who had made any accomplishment on leading Negro people."

It was a couple of years later when I accepted Islam as a movement and the Nation as an organization which

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